

**Amendments to the Claims:**

The following Listing of Claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims

Claims 1-11 (Canceled).

12. (Currently amended) A computer-implemented system for managing the risk or occurrence of surgical site infection incident to a surgical procedure, the computer-implemented system comprising:

~~means~~ a module for identifying a plurality of stages of operative care associated with the surgical procedure, including at least a preoperative stage, an intraoperative stage and a postoperative stage;

~~means~~ a module for identifying one or more points-of-care within each identified stage of operative care associated with the surgical procedure;

for each point-of-care associated with the surgical procedure, ~~means~~ a module for identifying one or a plurality of health care delivery practices associated with the surgical procedure that pose a source of measurable risk of surgical site infection, wherein the health care delivery practices associated with the surgical procedure that pose a source of measurable risk of surgical site infection are selectable for a given health care facility;

~~means~~ a module for identifying one or more compliance indicators associated with the surgical procedure for the one or plurality of health care delivery practices associated with the surgical procedure within each point-of-care associated with the surgical procedure whereby there is provided the ability to monitor the compliance indicators, wherein at least some of the compliance indicators quantify a measure of quality associated with delivery of corresponding health care delivery practices; and

for each of the compliance indicators, ~~means~~ a computer-implemented module for generating a flag when a given health care delivery practice associated with the surgical procedure is not in compliance with a rule to thereby align the health care delivery practices associated with the surgical procedure into rule compliance and to provide a perioperative process map of delivery practices spanning the plurality of stages of operative care associated

with the surgical procedure to thereby manage the risk or occurrence of surgical site infection incident to the surgical procedure.

13. (Currently amended) A system for managing the risk or occurrence of surgical site infection incident to a surgical procedure, the system comprising:

a module for identifying one or more health care delivery practices associated with the surgical procedure that pose a source of measurable risk of surgical site infection, wherein the health care delivery practices associated with the surgical procedure that pose a source of measurable risk of surgical site infection are selectable for a given health care facility;

a module for identifying one or more compliance indicators associated with the surgical procedure for the one or plurality of health care delivery practices associated with the surgical procedure within each point-of-care associated with the surgical procedure, wherein at least some of the compliance indicators quantify a measure of quality associated with delivery of corresponding health care delivery practices;

(a) — ~~means a module~~ for constructing a perioperative process map of practices for the delivery of the surgical procedure, the map comprising ~~the one or more a plurality of~~ health care delivery practices associated with the surgical procedure and ~~the one or more~~ indicators of compliance with the one or more health care practices, ~~wherein the health care delivery practices associated with the surgical procedure that pose a source of measurable risk of surgical site infection are selectable for a given health care facility, and wherein at least some of the compliance indicators quantify a measure of quality associated with delivery of corresponding health care practices; and~~

(b) — ~~means a computer-implemented module~~ for monitoring the compliance indicators to achieve a desired level of management of the risk of surgical site infection for the surgical procedure, wherein the ~~means~~ computer-implemented module for monitoring the compliance indicators generates a flag when a given health care practice associated with the surgical procedure is not in compliance with a rule to thereby manage the risk of surgical site infection incident to the surgical procedure.

14. (Currently amended) The system of claim 13 further comprising ~~means~~ a module for recording the compliance indicators.

15. (Currently amended) The system of claim 13 wherein the computer-implemented module for monitoring ~~means~~ comprises a software-encoded information management device.

16. (Currently amended) The system of claim 13 wherein the computer-implemented module for monitoring comprises a software-encoded information management device that is capable of operating across a network of computers.

17. (Original) The system of claim 15 wherein the information management device is delivered to one or more users via the internet.

18. (Currently amended) The system of claim 13 further comprising ~~means~~ a module for monitoring one or more indicators of outcome.

19. (Previously presented) The system of claim 18 wherein the outcome is the rate of the incidence of surgical site infection.

20. (Previously presented) The system of claim 18 wherein the outcome is the patient satisfaction.

21. (Previously presented) The system of claim 18 wherein the outcome is cost.

22. (Currently amended) A computer-implemented method for managing risks of surgical site infection incident to a surgical procedure, the method comprising:

selecting, via a computer, for a given health care facility a plurality of health care delivery practices associated with the surgical procedure that pose a source of measurable risk of surgical site infection;

evaluating, via the computer, a given one of the practices associated with the surgical procedure that poses an infection risk during a stage of the surgical procedure;

storing, via the computer, data indicative of the given practice associated with the surgical procedure as executed by one or more persons involved with the surgical procedure; ~~and~~

identifying via a compliance indicator when the data indicative of the given practice associated with the surgical procedure is not in compliance with a rule established for the given practice to thereby manage risks of surgical site infection incident to the surgical procedure, wherein the compliance indicator quantifies a measure of quality associated with delivery of the given practice; and

generating, via the computer, a flag associated with the compliance indicator when the given practice associated with the surgical procedure is not in compliance with a rule established for the given practice to thereby align the given practice into rule compliance.

23. (Canceled).

24. (Currently amended)      The method of claim ~~23~~ 22, further comprising prompting medical personnel to take further action when the flag is generated.

25. (Previously presented)      The method of claim 24, further comprising clearing the flag when the further action is taken.

26. (Previously presented)      The method of claim 22, further comprising generating a perioperative process map of a plurality of practices in a plurality of stages, the plurality of stages including at least a preoperative stage, an intraoperative stage, and a postoperative stage.

27. (Previously presented)      The method of claim 26, further comprising for each stage of the perioperative process map:

evaluating practices that pose infection risks during the given stage of the surgical procedure;

storing data indicative of each of the practices as executed by one or more persons involved with the surgical procedure; and

identifying when the data indicative of any of the practices is not in compliance with a rule established for the given practice.

28. (Previously presented) The method of claim 27, wherein identifying when the data indicative of any of the practices is not in compliance with the rule established for the given practice comprises generating a flag for the data indicative of one of the practices not in compliance with the rule established for that practice.

29. (Previously presented) The method of claim 28, further comprising prompting medical personnel to take further action when the flag is generated.

30. (Previously presented) The method of claim 29, further comprising clearing the flag when the further action is taken.

31 (Canceled).

32. (Previously presented) The method of claim 22, wherein the computer-implemented method is implemented by the computer in hardware.

33. (Previously presented): The method of claim 22, further comprising:

evaluating each of a plurality of practices associated with the surgical procedure that pose infection risks during the surgical procedure;

storing data indicative of each of the practices as executed by one or more persons involved with the surgical procedure; and

identifying when the data indicative of one or more of the practices associated with the surgical procedure is not in compliance with a respective rule established for a respective practice.

34. (Previously presented) The method of claim 22, further wherein the compliance indicator defines a value within a pre-established quality scale.

35. (Previously presented) The method of claim 34, wherein the quality scale ranges from 1 to 10.

36. (Previously presented) The method of claim 22, further comprising generating a report that represents a compilation of measurement data associated with the surgical procedure.

37. (Currently amended) A computer-implemented system for managing risks of surgical site infection incident to a surgical procedure, the system comprising:

~~means~~ a module for selecting for a given health care facility a plurality of health care delivery practices associated with the surgical procedure that pose a source of measurable risk of surgical site infection;

~~means~~ a module for evaluating a given one of the practices associated with the surgical procedure that poses an infection risk during a stage of the surgical procedure;

~~means~~ a computer-implemented module for storing data indicative of the given practice associated with the surgical procedure as executed by one or more persons involved with the surgical procedure; ~~and~~

~~means~~ a computer-implemented module for identifying via a compliance indicator when the data indicative of the given practice associated with the surgical procedure is not in compliance with a rule established for the given practice to thereby manage risks of surgical site infection incident to the surgical procedure, wherein the compliance indicator quantifies a measure of quality associated with delivery of the given practice; and

a computer-implemented module for generating a flag associated with the compliance indicator when the given practice associated with the surgical procedure is not in compliance with a rule established for the given practice to thereby align the given practice associated with the surgical procedure into rule compliance.

38. (Canceled)

39. (Currently amended) The system of claim 37 ~~38~~, further comprising ~~means~~ a module for prompting medical personnel to take further action when the flag is generated.

40. (Currently amended) The system of claim 39, further comprising ~~means~~ a module for clearing the flag when the further action is taken.

41. (Currently amended) The system of claim 37, further comprising ~~means~~ a module for generating a perioperative process map of a plurality of practices in a plurality of stages, the plurality of stages including at least a preoperative stage, an intraoperative stage, and a postoperative stage.

42. (Currently amended) The system of claim 41, further comprising for each stage of the perioperative process map:

~~means~~ a module for evaluating practices that pose infection risks during the given stage of the surgical procedure;

~~means~~ a module for storing data indicative of each of the practices as executed by one or more persons involved with the surgical procedure; and

~~means~~ a module for identifying when the data indicative of any of the practices is not in compliance with a rule established for the given practice.

43. (Canceled)

44. (Currently amended) The system of claim 37 ~~43~~, further comprising ~~means~~ a module for prompting medical personnel to take further action when the flag is generated.

45. (Currently amended) The system of claim 44, further comprising ~~means~~ a module for clearing the flag when the further action is taken.

46. (Currently amended) The system of claim 37, further comprising:

~~means~~ a module for evaluating each of a plurality of practices associated with the surgical procedure that pose infection risks during the surgical procedure;

~~means~~ a module for storing data indicative of each of the practices as executed by one or more persons involved with the surgical procedure; and

~~means~~ a module for identifying when the data indicative of one or more of the practices associated with the surgical procedure is not in compliance with a respective rule established for a respective practice.

47. (Previously presented) The system of claim 37, further wherein the compliance indicator defines a value within a pre-established quality scale.

48. (Previously presented) The system of claim 47, wherein the quality scale ranges from 1 to 10.

49. (Currently amended) The system of claim 37, further comprising ~~means~~ a computer-implemented module for generating a report that represents a compilation of measurement data associated with the surgical procedure.